

COMMUNITY NEWS

Nation's foodbank hires assistant

BY DON DECKER,
YAN News

"Health is Wealth" states Amanda Honwyte, a Hopi and Yavapai of the Yavapai-Apache Nation who has just joined the food bank team in Middle Verde.

Ms. Honwyte has been at the food bank for 3 weeks as of January 5 and she is definitely qualified for the position.

Ms. Honwyte possesses an Associate of Arts Degree in General Studies from Yavapai College (2012) and a Bachelors of Arts in Psychology with a minor in Criminal Justice/Criminology from Arizona State University (2014).

But Mrs. Honwyte is not one to be satisfied with 2 college degrees. Instead, she is pursuing another goal to be a "holistic nutrition holistic counselor."

That's why she continues to leave no stone unturned to find healthier ways to cook, planting garden at her home and constantly upgrading her knowl-

edge base including "environmental sustainability" which is a new science that addresses the total facet of clean air and water.

More recently, before coming to the food bank, she had been on a campaign to share her knowledge about healthy foods, conducting workshops and demonstrating healthy cooking techniques at the Nation's Distant Drum RV park for 3 classes in what she calls "community service" - which simply means to share information.

Ms. Honwyte swears on fruits and vegetables. "Diet is very important and from what I've been learning, it has to do with our overall whole body life style. The food that we eat can contribute nutrients to our body but not just physically but mentally and emotionally," she said. "Diet plays a huge role in how we live and how we feel."

Ms. Honwyte also says that there is a direct correlation between depression

and diet. "People who are more depressed are more likely to eat bad food. People who eat more fruit and vegetables are less likely to be a depression risk. That interplays with my psychology background, and it fascinates me," says Ms. Honwyte.

She also elaborates on "food insecurity", a terminology attached to a national consensus about poverty and its relationship to hunger which affects poor health.

"Food insecurity and poor health is one of the largest challenges facing tribal Nations. It's sad to see our Native people suffering from poor health conditions, and disease", adds Ms. Honwyte.

Ms. Honwyte sees a gold mine across the river from the food bank where the tribal agricultural fields are located which she considers heaven sent for the Nation.

"As a tribe we have our land and water resources. We need to be more food secure. I truly believe this will greatly reduce food

insecurity, promote good health and allow us to reconnect with our natural surroundings," she says.

Ms. Honwyte changed her diet and became a "vegan", someone who doesn't eat meat, poultry, eggs or animal meat. This means the absence of a back yard gas grill cooking juicy steaks and eating a bucket full of chicken wings while watching football on the TV. She lost 30 pounds from the change over in her diet.

"I'm focused on eating only foods grown from the earth: No GMO's (genetically modified organisms), no pesticides, no artificial colors, additives or preservatives," she states.

Take a walk inside of the Nation's food bank and it is well stocked with various assorted food items such as bags of potatoes, Blackburn's Grape Jelly, canned chicken, fruit cocktail, stacks of enriched spaghetti including some whole grain spaghetti, Peter Pan Peanut Butter and a refrigerator filled



Amanda Honwyte of Middle Verde is the new Food Bank Assistant who will be working with Lavina Sanchez, food bank manager.

with fresh bread and a freezer with beef chorizos and a frozen package of meat from the Nation's tribal ranch. "What I would like to see is more fresh fruits and vegetables," says Ms. Honwyte.

"I think it's our duty to create access to healthful foods by utilizing the land-and resources to we have to grow and produce foods that can be openly available to tribal members," she adds.

Ms. Honwyte practices what she preaches by having a

small garden behind her small apartment located nearby. She plans to work closely with the various programs in the community health program and to utilize the diabetes program's community garden plots located in Middle Verde to supplement the food bank's offerings.

Ms. Honwyte husband is music producer and musician, Jah B and they share a daughter 16 month old Niyah.

Social Service department adds new personnel

BY DON DECKER,
YAN News

Alexandria Miles, the new social worker for the Nation is a maverick who shows independence. A good attribute for a social worker.

After all, she spent all of 1994 working as a social worker on the Aleutian Islands in a place called Dutch Harbor 1,000 miles west from Anchorage. "It's known for the TV show, 'The Deadliest Catch,'" she says. The Aleutian Islands is also noted for the Japanese occupation on U.S. lands during WWII. Tribal elder member Neil Lewis and the late Daniel Tapija were both stationed in Dutch Harbor there in the mid-50s.

"I was there for about a year and that was my first exposure to Alaska. It is one of the most remote Alaskan places

you could be," added Ms. Miles. It's 1,000 miles from Anchorage.

After the Aleutian Islands, she went to Anchorage and was placed in charge of a Native American program with the Charter Hospital performing psychiatric care as director for 2 years.

"It was a wonderful program and we were able to get kids that had attempted suicide who were brought in from the bush country, from all over Alaska for psychiatric care," said Ms. Miles.

Ms. Miles was in Anchorage for 2 years from '95-'96. Prior to the Alaskan experience, she had been in Arizona for years. "When I was in Alaska it got very cold and I was mostly frozen solid," she says.

To survive in such adverse conditions while serving the peo-



Alexandria Miles

ple of Alaska, it took perseverance and Ms. Miles learned the idea of survival while growing up on a farm in Kansas. "My family is from Payola, Kansas and we're farm folks," she says. Interestingly, with a town name like "Payola", which has connotations to sums of cash, Ms. Miles followed her dedication

as social worker to those places that rewarded her well.

Ms. Miles is a graduate of Arizona State University with a Masters in Social Work, a very prestigious degree that requires intense study and rigorous certification by the State of Arizona.

Back to the state of Alaska, Ms. Miles didn't get enough of Alaska so in 2008 she became social worker at Prince Williams Sound in Valdez, Alaska. The Google site shows pristine bay and snow covered mountains. This is also the site of the famous Exxon Valdez oil leak years ago and the area is still under recovery. "The word 'Sound' was destroyed,"

says Ms. Miles about the oil spill.

Before she arrived at Yavapai-Apache Nation, Ms. Miles worked in Wasilla, Alaska a small rural town a few miles north of Anchorage.

Of course everyone knows Wasilla as the home of notorious former governor of Alaska and vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin who ran with John McCain.

"She was my neighbor and I only know her as a nice lady," says Ms. Miles about Ms. Palin. And no, Ms. Miles couldn't see Russia from Wasilla as Ms. Palin once claimed.

"I lived a couple blocks from her and knew her when she was the governor but after what happened with McCain (they lost the election), she (Ms. Palin) never came back," says Ms. Miles.

In Wasilla, Ms. Miles was the Care Coordinator/Case

Manager for the elderly from 2008 to 2017.

Ms. Miles' participates in spiritual events at the Catholic Church in Cottonwood and reads documents about the environment. "I've learned about the Tundra and the carbon emissions leading to acid rain," she says. Another concern she has is the slow melting of the tundra and the melting of ice in the Arctic which has led to the dislocation of Polar bears.

Like many people say, she says her professional endeavor is not the "first rodeo" she has participated in. "I want to benefit from everybody as I feel that we're a team and we're going to get more team players to make a commitment to this (social work). I see this job as having so much opportunity, says Ms. Miles.

HR department adds new administrative assistant

BY DON DECKER,
YAN News

YAN member Nadine Jackson accepted a new position as HR Administrative Assistant. With just a few days on the job, Ms. Jackson said her new position keeps her "busy with a lot of paperwork" and getting use to work responsibilities. "I keep asking questions 'til I can get it to do my job correctly," she added.

For the past 13 years, she was employed at the Cliff Castle Casino as a Slot Technician and was promoted to Lead Slot Technician.

"I started at the casino October 12, 2004



Nadine Jackson

after moving back to the Nation from Phoenix," said Ms. Jackson. By using the transferable skills from the casino, she has

been able to adapt to her new work environment she said.

Ms. Jackson is a single parent having raised 3 children: a daughter and 2 sons.

"I became a grandmother so I have 2 grandchildren. I kind of spoil them," she said when asked if she had any hobbies.

Ms. Jackson graduated from Sherman Indian High School, a government boarding school in Riverside,

California where she completed her general studies. Her formative years were spent at the Beaver Creek School in Rimrock for elementary and middle school.

Ms. Jackson is from the Rimrock YAN community where she was raised by her mother, the late Kiki Jackson and her grandmother was the late Maysie Jackson.

Rimrock is a small hamlet about 6 miles northeast of Middle Verde. "I have lots of aunts and uncles," she said proudly. Arlin Carlton, ASA Peer Support Specialist (counselor) for the Nation is her first cousin.



Community members gather to witness the ribbon cutting for the new community Center at Tunlii.